

The Purpose of a Solemn Assembly

Within the Church, organized on April 6th 1830, there are three types of authority. These types of authority are referred to as – administrative, legislative, and judicial. Reference to them can be found in the *Rules and Resolutions* handbook of The Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (1952, Herald House, pgs. 12-15).

A Solemn Assembly can be particularly misunderstood to be similar to a General Assembly of the Church. It is not the same.

The General Assembly is the highest legislative gathering of the Church. It is done by Priesthood Quorums of the Church to take care of Church business. The most noteworthy General Assembly took place in August of 1835. The major item of business was the acceptance of the Book of Doctrine and Covenants as doctrine to the Church. The acceptance was by vote of the Priesthood Quorums and Orders of the Church. (See RLDS Church History, Vol. 1, chapter 22, pgs. 572-582)

The other major legislative gatherings are Conferences. General Conference, Stake Conference, and District Conference would be examples of Conference gatherings. These legislative gatherings also take care of the business of the Church at the level they have authority to act.

The Solemn Assembly is not a legislative gathering at all. The purpose of this gathering is for worship. The Solemn Assembly is what God wants it to be. Historically, we can look at Solemn Assemblies in the Old Testament. In addition, there are gatherings that have a similar purpose as a Solemn Assembly that are not identified as such. One would be in the New Testament and has Saints gathering in the upper room that we have come to know as Pentecost. Another would be in the Book of Mormon when King Benjamin called the people together.

In these gatherings we see some common purposes for their worship. We see the people have come before the Lord with “a broken heart and contrite spirit”, in order to repent before the Lord. In those instances where they appear to come before the Lord in the correct manner they seek for forgiveness and healing. They seek to know longer to do evil. They seek to know God’s will for them as an individual and as a people and then go and prepare to do His will.

This is the purpose of a Solemn Assembly. The Solemn Assembly is centered around worship and repentance, in order to better know and do God’s will as a person and as a people.

You are invited to join with brothers and sisters from around the world to seek his face and repent of your ways that do not lead you to do good for God and His Kingdom.

May God’s blessing be upon you. Now and forever more. Amen.

High Priest Steve Bohall

High Priest Marlin Guin

Seventy Richard Neill